



Protecting and Restoring the Santa Barbara Channel and Its Watersheds

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July 18, 2008

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attention: Melissa Miller-Henson

To the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative,

On behalf of the staff, the Board of Directors, and members of Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, I would like to nominate Michael Sheehy to serve on the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative's South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group. California's enactment of the MLPA was an auspicious moment in recognizing the importance of marine ecosystems and the need for a more sustainable and comprehensive management of our state's marine resources. The execution of the MLPA Initiative demonstrates California's commitment to this priority. Furthermore, the transparency of the process and its principal focus on encouraging widespread public participation throughout is a decision-making model to be commended.

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper enthusiastically supports Michael Sheehy in representing its interests in the MLPA Initiative's established forum for public participation in our region, the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG). Santa Barbara Channelkeeper is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds through citizen action, education, field work, and enforcement. The directive of the MLPA, to establish a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) along the entire California coastline and its adjacent islands, will only be effective if the network design is based on regional and ecological knowledge, sound science, and if it recognizes the inherent social and natural value of these marine regions. We are confident that Michael's personal and professional investment in the marine ecosystem of the Santa Barbara Channel, his extensive background in marine ecology, his experience in professional, cross-sector relationship building, and his facile and diplomatic communication will represent our priorities capably. He will be a unifying presence on the SCRSG in its commitment to completing the process.

Michael's familiarity with the marine environments of California's south coast is a result of his extensive career in the region as a marine biologist and a marine science consultant. Michael received his master's degree in Marine Ecology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and he has been a Research Associate with the Marine Science Institute (MSI) and a Project

Manager for the research consortium, Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO), at UCSB for more than eight years. Michael's research with MSI and PISCO focuses on ecological factors, such as larval dispersal and recruitment dynamics, and their role in structuring near-shore marine communities. The majority of his research is on populations of commercially important species, including numerous rockfish species, kelp bass, cabezon, and squid, at the Channel Islands and along the coast of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, and he has worked with the California Department of Fish and Game on a number of these projects. He has logged hundreds of hours as a research diver conducting community surveys and has a working knowledge of the marine flora and fauna of the Santa Barbara Channel as well as first-hand knowledge of locally important marine habitats. Michael's research is critical to the scientific basis of MPA design; he has worked on studies looking at the effect of MPAs and is intimately familiar with ecosystem-based management principles.

In addition to his expertise in science and regional knowledge, Michael has experience in translating and communicating marine science and conservation issues to the general public. As a consultant, Michael has worked for philanthropic interests on the development of an enterprise to support global marine resource management and has created briefs for businesses, such as one on the whaling industry for Patagonia, Inc. In much of his consulting work, Michael has had the responsibility of building diverse, cross-sector relationships and fostering consensus across diverse interests. Michael has partnered with A-Frame Surf Shop in Carpinteria, CA to develop an instructional curriculum on marine biology and California's marine life for the students of their Ocean Adventure Surf Camp. Michael is currently working with Santa Barbara Channelkeeper as Marine Conservation Coordinator, a role that includes developing communication and outreach channels to educate and engage the local public in the MLPA Initiative process.

Apart from his professional dedication to in the marine environment, Michael has a personal fondness for its intrinsic value and recreational opportunities. Michael is an avid surfer, long time sailor and crews in the weekly Santa Barbara harbor races, and enjoys spear fishing. He also serves on the Board of Iemanya Oceanica, a non-profit organization, dedicated to the protection of sharks and rays and their habitats through education and research, primarily in Southern California and Mexico.

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper believes Michael Sheehy will best represent our members' interests in the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group and will have a balanced perspective of other stakeholder interests. He will be entirely committed to the process and to the scheduling and time demands its completion requires. Please accept this letter as Santa Barbara Channelkeeper's nomination of Michael Sheehy to the SCRG.

Sincerely,



Kira Redmond
Executive Director

Nominee contact information:
Michael Sheehy, Marine Conservation Coordinator



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July 18, 2008

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attention: Melissa Miller-Henson
Via Email: MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov

Re: Support for Southern California Regional Stakeholder Group Candidates

Dear Ms. Miller-Henson:

On behalf of California Coastkeeper Alliance, I am pleased to submit this letter in support of several well-qualified candidates who have been nominated to the Southern California Regional Stakeholder Group. California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA) advocates statewide for clean water and a healthy ocean on behalf of itself and California's 12 Waterkeeper organizations spanning the coast from the Oregon border to San Diego. The true bottom-up nature of the Waterkeeper model is unique in California; each of our 12 member groups are autonomous, locally based, individual non-profit organizations that work to protect the health of the waters within their local communities. As such, each Waterkeeper can offer a unique voice and local expertise to the Regional Stakeholder Group.

Under the MLPA framework, the Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG) is the primary entity responsible for initiating proposals for protected area networks. It is imperative that the composition of the RSG reflect that a large majority of Californians support the creation of more marine protected areas, including marine reserves, and that the oceans are a public asset, held in trust for future generations. The daily work of the Waterkeepers is focused on their local watersheds with an emphasis on community outreach and working collaboratively with various stakeholders. This expertise makes each of the four candidates listed below well-suited for the RSG. Moreover, these candidates have first hand knowledge of the marine resources in their geographic area and have a unique perspective to contribute to the creation of marine protected areas. Our top endorsements (in alphabetical order) are:

Tom Ford, Baykeeper & Executive Director, Santa Monica Baykeeper

Mr. Ford's background in ocean issues, education and work experience spans both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Mr. Ford was educated as a biologist and marine ecologist at the University of Rhode Island and UCLA. He previously worked as a commercial shell fisherman in Rhode Island, digging clams from Narragansett Bay. He also worked as a biological observer aboard dredges and shrimp boats in Georgia and the Carolinas for the National Marine Fisheries Service and Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Since 1998, Mr. Ford has directed the Santa Monica Baykeeper Kelp Restoration Project, which was part of CCKA's Giant Kelp Restoration Project that spanned Southern California from Santa Barbara to San Diego and included the other Southern California Waterkeepers. Currently Mr. Ford is the Executive Director of the Santa Monica Baykeeper and the President of the Board of CCKA. He serves as a Vice Chair of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission Governing Board and as an environmental representative on the Los Angeles Long Beach Harbor

Safety Committee. Mr. Ford's knowledge of the kelp forests off Southern California is supported by his studies and his more than 2000 hours on the ocean and over 600 dives in southern California in the past ten years.

Kate Hanley, *Director of Operations and Marine Conservation Director, San Diego Coastkeeper*

Ms. Hanley has been the lead for San Diego Coastkeeper for the last three years on projects related to protection of local Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) and overlapping marine conservation areas at La Jolla Shores. Ms. Hanley was instrumental in developing the community outreach and education portion of the La Jolla Shores Coastal Watershed Management Plan, an ASBS Protection Model developed by San Diego Coastkeeper, Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the City of San Diego. In addition to her strong background in marine biology, she possesses expertise in public outreach and education, and commitment to increasing awareness of water quality and marine conservation issues within the community. Ms. Hanley has proven to be an effective coordinator and effective at considering and representing varying points of view while fostering productive relationships. She will bring a strong, positive energy to the RSG along with extensive knowledge of the San Diego Region.

Ray Hiemstra, *Associate Director of Programs, Orange County Coastkeeper*

As the Associate Director of Programs for Orange County Coastkeeper, Mr. Hiemstra has been working to protect our coast for eight years. Through managing a variety of marine research projects in Newport Bay and Huntington Harbour and work on a restoration project on the Newport Coast, he has been directly involved in documenting marine resource conditions. Mr. Hiemstra's extensive localized knowledge of marine resources in Orange County is balanced with a regional perspective. Recognized as a go-to person in the environmental community in Orange County, he is a member of numerous stakeholder and technical advisory groups, where he is often the only environmental voice. As such, he has developed excellent communication and negotiation skills and has a record of developing innovative solutions to reach consensus with diverse stakeholders. Mr. Hiemstra is a facilitator for the Citizen Watershed Monitors of Orange County and is a regular participant in meetings of the Orange County Coastal Coalition and both the Newport Bay and Aliso Creek Watershed Stakeholder groups.

Michael Sheehy, *Marine Conservation Coordinator, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper*

As the Marine Conservation Coordinator for Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, Mr. Sheehy educates the public on marine conservation efforts and issues relating to the Santa Barbara Channel. Mr. Sheehy brings extensive regional knowledge of the Santa Barbara Channel marine ecosystem and scientific expertise in marine ecology, specifically in areas of ecology critical to ecosystem-based management and the scientific basis for marine protected areas. He holds a master's degree in Marine Ecology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and has more than eight years of experience as a Research Associate with the Marine Science Institute and as a Project Manager with the research consortium, Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans, at UCSB. Mr. Sheehy has extensive experience in communicating marine science and conservation issues to the public and he has demonstrated success in cross-sector collaboration and relationship building through consulting work for non-profit and business interests. Mr. Sheehy serves on the Board of Iemanya Oceanica, a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of sharks and rays and their habitats through education and research primarily in Southern California and Mexico.

Additionally, CCKA supports the nomination of people who represent other constituencies, including national and regional conservation groups, divers, scientists, local businesses, and sport and commercial fishermen. In particular, we support the nomination of the following candidates (in alphabetical order):

Sarah Abramson, *Heal the Bay*

Jenn Feinberg, *Natural Resources Defense Council*

Marcela Gutierrez, *WiLDCOAST*

Greg Helms, *Ocean Conservancy*

We have found these people to be constructive and willing to listen as well as represent and involve multiple constituencies. We support their candidacies because they have a wealth of experience and expertise on these issues and we think they will make a valuable contribution to a collective process of fact finding and developing MPA network recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AH', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Angela Haren
Program Director



July 18, 2008

Via email: MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov

Re: Support for nominees to RSG

Dear Ms. Miller-Henson:

The Natural Resources Defense Council would like to offer our support for a number of nominees to the Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG). NRDC is a non-profit conservation group with a long history of advocacy for healthy coast and ocean systems and sustainable fisheries. With over 230,000 California members and activists (1.2 million nationwide), we support an inclusive, transparent process for implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act.

The RSG is an integral part of this process. We applaud your goal of including members who can work collaboratively and communicate with and represent a broad array of interests. The composition should also reflect the fact that a large majority of southern Californians support creation of more marine protected areas, including marine reserves (Public Policy Institute of California, Edge Research).

Whether they come from the conservation community or the business world, each of the RSG candidates listed below brings to the process unique skills, firsthand knowledge of the region's coast and oceans, and rich communication networks as well as a commitment to collaboration and the ability to listen. We support their candidacies because we think they will make a valuable contribution to a collective process of fact finding and developing MPA network recommendations.

Sarah Abramson, *Coastal Resources Director for Heal the Bay*, has a Masters degree in Coastal Marine Resources Management from the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management. She has garnered local knowledge from SCUBA diving in the region and from her stint as a naturalist at Catalina Island Marine Institute. Her work helping local lobster trappers develop a collaborative monitoring program for spiny lobster at the Channel Islands Marine Protected Areas demonstrates her strong collaborative skills and her ability to apply her scientific knowledge to practical challenges.

Kate Hanley, *Director of Operations and Marine Conservation Director, San Diego Coastkeeper*, has a background in marine biology, local knowledge of the San Diego coast and ocean, a regional perspective and a can-do attitude. She has extensive communication networks and outstanding skills in areas of particular value for the MLPA process: in coordination and collaboration (e.g. her work to implement areas of special biological significance) and in community outreach and education (e.g. for the La Jolla Shores Coastal Watershed Management Plan).

Michael Sheehy, *Marine Conservation Coordinator, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper*, has extensive experience communicating marine science and conservation issues to the public and has demonstrated success in cross-sector collaboration and relationship building through his consulting for non-profit and business interests. Mr. Sheehy brings together extensive regional knowledge of the Santa Barbara Channel marine ecosystem and scientific expertise in marine ecology. He has a master's degree in Marine Ecology from UCSB and over eight years experience as a Research Associate and as a Project Manager with the Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans, at UCSB.

Tom Ford, *Executive Director, Santa Monica Baykeeper*. Mr. Ford's education and work experience spans the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and ranges from fishing to habitat restoration and education, giving him a broad perspective that can benefit the MLPA process. Educated as a biologist and marine ecologist at the University of Rhode Island and UCLA, he has worked as a commercial shell fisherman in Rhode Island, as a biological observer aboard dredges and shrimp boats, and as director of the Santa Monica Baykeeper Kelp Restoration Project. He also serves as a Vice Chair of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, and has an extensive network of contacts in the region.

Marcela Gutierrez, *WildCoast*, is a native of the Border Region and resident of the South San Diego Area. She has an undergraduate degree in Business Management, leadership expertise initiating and maintaining strategic business partnerships, and experience working for a seafood distributor. She is 100% bilingual in Spanish and will bring to the RSG strong problem solving skills and business and Latin communication networks

Greg Helms, *Ocean Conservancy*, has lived in the region for over two decades and has worked professionally on marine policy issues for fifteen years. Before OC, he served as community affairs director for Environmental Defense Center, a group that works closely with commercial fishing groups. In addition to following scientific studies of the region's ocean, he has a deep well of direct knowledge from sailing, surfing and SCUBA diving. He learned a great deal from participation in the Channel Islands MPA designation process and the ongoing monitoring program for that network.

We have not attempted to be comprehensive, but rather to focus on a few individuals with whom we have direct experience, and who will bring diverse and valuable skills to the RSG process. We appreciate the opportunity to offer our views to the selection process.

Sincerely,

Karen Garrison

Co-Director, NRDC Ocean Program